Allotment of wagons to salt manufacturers

942. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether at the time of granting permission to manufacture iodised salt, the Salt Commissioner had given an undertaking that wagons should be allotted to the manufacturers on priority basis for movement of iodised salt;

(b) whether Government have directed salt Commissioner for allotment of an ad hoc quota;

(c) whether final policy decision in the matter of allotment of wagons has been taken by Government and if not, by when it is likely to be taken;

(d) what are the details of the letter written by his Ministry to the Salt Commissioner;

(e) what is the rationale of the location of Salt Commissioner's office in Jaipur, when 40 per cent of salt is produced in Guajarat and what is the quantity of salt moved from Gujarat under zonal Scheme; and

(f) whether faulty distribution of iodised salt is one of the main reasons why the programme of goitre eradciation has failed in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (d). In response to letter from parties who had shown interest for manufacturing iodised salt the Salt Commissioner in his letter had mentioned certain conditions on the basis of which their request could be considered. One of the conditions was that the "Salt Commissioner agrees to grant wagon quota under Category 'B for the movement of iodised salt produced by such manufacturers to goitre endemic areas". At the time of granting permission for commercial manufacture of iodised salt, however, the Salt Commissioner had stated that indents for wagons for movement of iodised salt under Category 'B' will be placed after obtaining counter signature on the forwarding notes by the Salt Deptt. officers. No specific mention regarding providing wagon quota was made in this letter. On receipt of representation from a party that undertaking was given by the Salt Commissioner regarding allotment of wagons to them on priority basis, the Salt Commissioner has been advised that in such cases allotments may be made out of ad-hoc quota of wagons avaliable with the Salt Department. In view of the complexity of alloting the zonal quota for movement of iodised salt amongst salt manufacturers and salt traders who have set up iodisation units, the Central Advisory Board for Salts in its last meeting held on 12th November, 1986, constituted a committee to examine the issues involved and make recommendations in regard to the policy to be adopted in future in this regard.

(e) Office of the Salt Commissioner was earlier shifted to Jaipur in 1958 as per Government policy to remove congestion in the capital. The Salt Commissioner has, apart from assisting the salt producers, to play a very important role in the distribution of salt, including iodised salt to different parts of the country. Ror this purpose, the Salt Commissioner has to remain in constant touch with the State Government and the Ministries of Railways, Transport and Shipping, Health and Family Welfare and Industry. Proximity to Delhi and a central location is therefore, of advantage.

Quantity moved from Gujarat under zonal scheme is as under—

	(in '000 tonnes)
1984	947.9
1985	1181.8
1986	1231.5

(f) There have been no comlaints of scarcity of iodised salt for want of wagons in the present scheme of things.